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I Survived The Siege of Vicksburg

Today is July 4, 1863 and everyone I see has no food, no resources, and no pride. The Siege has finally ended. Lee surrendered to Grant. Being in Vicksburg was almost like a storm of chaos and deadliness. I should know. I lived through it. It started a few months ago, May 18. There was a day close to when all of this madness started and my brother had a chance to come home from fighting, but of course not for a good reason. He came home face pale, except of course for the blood. He also had his fair share of broken bones. And the week after, our shelter was hit by gunfire and we had to spend all of the next week repairing it and not letting it fall on top of us. I have learned that there is plenty of things be scared of and plenty of things that can kill you. I am just a child. Should I have to worry about whether or not my brother is going to heal from his sickness he contracted while away at war, or if my mother and I are going to have enough to keep us well for supper, or if I'm even going to wake up in the morning? That is certainly not what I thought, but now look at where I am - grieving for my father in a cave we've built to survive.

Winfield Scott came up with the plan to blockade the Confederacy's own Mississippi River and one day capture it. It was called the Anaconda Plan. We had no resources imported, and by "we", I mean the citizens of Vicksburg. People ate anything that they could get their hands on: dogs, cats, horses, rats, tree bark and other innocent things they found off the side of the streets. To stay alive and out of reach of gunshots and bombs, people built caves or stayed in their basements. There were over five hundred caves built. The Union had us backed into a corner. I am truly kind of relieved of this because slavery was wrong, and what if we won and it was not stopped or if slavery spread to the North? Of course, slavery was not the only issue between the two sides. The South also just wanted to be independent from the North, which I fully support. But for months, I didn't even care which side did win because I was only wishing that the terror of the Siege would be over.

Today was magnificent, coming out of the cave, even if the scenery was quite depressing.

The rich have left early and the poor were stranded here, which included mother and me. She said that the Civil War is one of the worst wars in history. Of course, today we should be rejoicing, but I have a feeling that this is not a new beginning, as our story's not over.

If you are reading this, please know that I will not let the story end here. I will make sure that people understand that the Siege of Vicksburg was very important in the Civil War because the Confederacy could not fight back when they had no food, no resources, and no pride.